

When Worlds Collide

Implementing a Joint Computer Help/Reference Desk

Carleton College—Northfield, MN



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Student Computing



The main desk in the Computer Center.

The Student Computing Information Center (SCIC) is a branch of Information Technology Services (ITS) that provides technical assistance to students.

Cultivation of expertise is addressed through the development of a "collective brain," a TWiki-based information resource that is easily searchable and editable by all student workers and librarians.

Establishment of a Second Service Point

The Research/IT Service ("research it!") in the Library



Research/IT provides a more convenient and integrated service to the students and aids in collaboration between the Gould Library and ITS.

- Student computing worker provides software assistance and troubleshoots equipment problems and login issues
- Reference librarians freed up to spend more time helping students with research
- New technology supports research using large data sets, GIS, and future research trends
- Students able to produce papers, presentations, multimedia projects in the same setting where they conduct their research
- New furniture that can be reconfigured into different arrangements

What worked?

SCIC worker on site to troubleshoot printers, password problems, server space

Librarians able to spend more time on reference questions and other software like EndNote and GIS

The TWiki for sharing information

Interaction between SCIC student and librarian

What was difficult?

Scheduling enough training time

SCIC workers adjusting to being off-site

Carleton students confused about the service, not realizing the student worker was a SCIC worker

Lack of publicity

Establishing new lines of communication

What's next?

Evaluation and assessment

Promoting the Research/IT services

Improving processes, training, service, and interactions between librarians and student workers

Increasing expertise in selected technology

Library Reference



The old Reference desk.

The librarians at the Reference Desk provide research assistance to students both in the library and online.

Renovation of Library Reference Area

The computers in this crowded lab were moved into the reference room...



...and the space was transformed into a comfortable reading room

Implementation Process

Joint Planning Committee	
Library:	ITS:
College Librarian	Director
Head of Reference	Associate Director for Academic Computing
Library Technology Coordinator	Student Computing Coordinator

Service Grid (Partial)			
SERVICES PROVIDED	Research/IT	SCIC	ITS Labs
Creating personalized information systems (ENDNOTE, news aggregators, MyMuse, etc.)	4	2	0
Finding and evaluating content	4	0	0
Finding and evaluating tools for content use	4	3	0
GIS (e.g. ArcView, ArcInfo)	2	0	0
Statistics (EXCEL, SPSS, etc.)	3	2	0
Help with presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint)	3	3	0

Student Exchange	
The Midwest Instructional Technology Center-funded a program to exchange students between Carleton and DePauw.	
DePauw student Mike Knight interviewed library and IT staff about their expectations, produced report with detailed recommendations.	

Scheduling	
<p>Work: [1] [2] Term: [Winter] Year: [2005]</p> <p>Display Week: [1]</p> <p>Work Number is 11</p> <p>Report for week 8, Fall term, 2004:</p>	
<p>Monday</p> <p>1a Trevor B. Buntman 08:49:55</p> <p>2a Neil F. Remington 09:52:06</p> <p>3a Max D. Allen MENSED</p> <p>4a Benjamin Y. Fane MENSED</p>	<p>Tuesday</p> <p>1.2a Peter M. Saut 08:24:55</p> <p>2a Trevor B. Buntman 08:54:28</p> <p>3a Julia E. Stach 10:17:00 TPCR S</p> <p>4a Adam J. Blum MENSED</p> <p>5a Thomas I. Hagman 10:13:04 TPCR S</p> <p>6a Benjamin G. Chappell 10:19:00</p>
<p>Wednesday</p> <p>1a Trevor B. Buntman 08:59:27</p> <p>2a Max D. Allen 09:37:57</p> <p>3a Adam J. Blum MENSED</p> <p>4a Benjamin Y. Fane MENSED</p>	

Evaluation	
Interviews with Research/IT desk student workers	
Survey students	
Feedback from reference librarians	